(b) whether Government are also aware that Argentina's Economy has become bankrupt leading to violent food riots, massive job cuts, 18.3 per cent growth of unemployment mass protest and volatile political uncertainties in the country; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. We are aware that the Argentinean economy is facing an extremely difficult economic and social situation.

(c) Current situation in Argentina is result of certain decisions of Argentinean authorities like Currency Board Arrangement, fiscal profligacy and adverse international and internal developments which made Argentinean exports lose competitiveness in international markets. India is unlikely to be affected by crisis in Argentina.

Aluminium scam

5053. SHRI SAT1SH PRADHAN:
SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to an appeal by All India Aluminium Secondary Manufacturers and Dealers which appeared in 'Indian Express', dated 17th April, 2002, captioned "Aluminium Scam"; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto and what corrective steps have been taken or Government propose to take in this regard by bringing the truth to light and the culprits to book?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have, after taking into account all relevant considerations, reduced the basic customs duty on aluminium from 25% to 15% with effect from 1.3.2002.

Double Tax Avoidance Treaty with Mauritius

5054. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether FDI flow will be affected if double tax avoidance treaty with Mauritius is terminated; and